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SUBJECT: TURKISH MEDIA REACTION
FRIDAY, DECEMBER 11, 2009

Media Highlights

A Warning Like A Quake to Israel From Erdogan (Sabah)
All papers today had banner headlines similar to mainstream Sabah in reporting Prime Minister Erdogan's response to a question by an Egyptian journalist regarding the allegations that Israel violates Turkish air space in order to watch Iran. Mainstreams Sabah and Hurriyet cite Israeli Jerusalem Post and quotes Prime Minister Erdogan as saying "No violations have occurred until now. If such a thing happens, consequences will be grave. Our response will be like an earthquake." Meanwhile, intellectual/Islamist-oriented Zaman and Hurriyet Daily News report that an Erdogan-Netanyahu summit is in the making with plans for Israeli Defense Minister Ehud Barak to visit Turkey soon, both citing official Israeli sources. Gungor Mengi opines in mass appeal Vatan: "Prime Minister Erdogan's 'earthquake' warning against Israel is not a healthy sign. Turkey's foreign policy has no tradition of threats, it's only the style of Arab countries. Could the reason for the warning be that Erdogan tried to distract Turkish people and make them look outside in the face of the worsening situation in Turkey?"

PKK Admission on Tokat Attack Rocks DTP / TGS Gives Details / PKK Returns to War / More PKK Returns
NTV, CNN Turk and all other TV channels last night and all media today report that PKK claimed responsibility for the terror attack in Tokat. Sabah says the attack rocked the DTP and notes that DTP leader Ahmet Turk, who had condemned the attack earlier, was astounded by the PKK statement and said "we do not approve attacks that target lives." In breaking news, CNN Turk is reporting that the TGS has announced that the PKK's regional Tunceli official gave the orders to attack the soldiers in Tunceli's Resadiye. During a TGS weekly press briefing, TGS Intelligence Chief General Ismail Hakki Pekin said "a 5-6 people group came to Tokat from Tunceli, launched the attack and reported it to their headquarters in Northern Iraq." General Pekin added that the attack was launched from four different positions and lasted for one minute. Leftist-nationalist Cumhuriyet reports the PKK-aligned Firat News Agency announced that "the attack was carried out by one of our teams on their own initiative, without orders from the command center." Cumhuriyet notes that following PKK statement, main opposition CHP leader Baykal criticized the government for producing

conspiracy theories. Mainstream Hurriyet notes that the PKK statement criticized the Turkish military's ongoing operations, the death of a university student during the protests in Diyarbakir and the prison conditions of jailed PKK leader Abdullah Ocalan. In "PKK Returns to War," liberal Radikal alleges that by launching the attacks in Tokat, the PKK has ended its cease fire and is hinting that fresh attacks are in the offing in their Firat News statement. In a related story, mainstreams Hurriyet and Vatan report that nine PKK members were killed during Turkish Military operations in Mardin and Hakkari and during joint operations with Iranian military at Turkey-Iran and Iraq border. And Islamist-oriented Yeni Safak claimed that nine PKK members, including one female, entered Turkey yesterday from Habur gate and surrendered to security forces.

Turkish Pundits Consider the Democratic Initiative vs the PKK

Mehmet Ali Birand writes in mass appeal Posta: "The experts in Washington believe recent incidents that have been seen in Turkey is nothing but a fight put up by the PKK and Abdullah Ocalan to secure themselves. The experts point to the disagreements within the PKK, and think that the government's Kurdish 'Democratic Initiative' has shaken the organization, and took it to the point of losing control. Likewise, they say Ocalan is provoking the incidents out of fear of being put aside. 'The PKK and Ocalan do not know what to do.' The experts' overall evaluation is that the PKK aims to put off for some time the Democratic Initiative, and in the meantime, try to resolve internal disagreements. The Americans say the 'Initiative' has shaken the PKK deeply, and stress that Erdogan should not halt the process."

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Cengiz Candar emphasizes in liberal Radikal: "The real problem between Washington and Ankara is the words and actions which feed bloodshed in Turkey. If you stop the 'Democratic Initiative' and weaken the PM, you can disrupt the balance in US-Turkey ties, and it's not important whether it's done by the PKK, CHP or MHP. The real problem within the context of Turkey-US relationship lies not in Washington but in Turkey."

Rusen Cakir observes in mass appeal Vatan: "With the PKK, you don't need other provocateurs in Turkey to derail the Kurdish 'Democratic Initiative.' The Tokat raid is another sign that the PKK did not do its part, and it doesn't give a picture that it will change from now on. We will soon see how high the cost will be for the PKK and the entire Turkey."

"Warrior Obama Gets Nobel Prize" is how leftist-nationalist Cumhuriyet and most Turkish media characterize President Obama's Nobel Peace Prize. CNNTurk and mainstream Hurriyet focus on Obama the "war president" and intellectual Islamist-oriented Zaman in "Obama Argues for War," underlines Obama's emphasis that "sometimes war is necessary." Mainstream Sabah plays up the President's comments, noting "you cannot stop people like Hitler or Al Qaeda by negotiations. . . unfortunately sometimes using force becomes necessary." In "Embarrassing Nobel," mass appeal Milliyet challenges Obama's Iran nuclear emphasis, with "Obama's first words were about war . . . this peace prize should have been embargoed and given to Obama at the end of his presidency."

"Warrior Obama Gets Nobel Prize (Cumhuriyet)
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against Iran's nuclear program and voiced support to the masses that took to the streets in protest of the non-democratic elections in Iran. Thus, Prime Minister Erdogan's recent statement after meeting with Obama in Washington earlier this week that the US President backs Turkey's Iran policy has been left up in the air now. It's clear that Obama does not put Iran, North Korea and Israel in the same basket. This peace prize should have been embargoed and given to Obama at the end of his presidency."

Gordon: "No Preconditions" for Normalization for Armenia-Turkey
In straight forward reporting mainstream Hurriyet and Islamist-oriented Zaman both report on AS Philip Gordon's comments at the Council on Foreign Relations on 12/10 that the United States supports the "normalization process between Armenia and Turkey and we asked both governments to approve the protocols as soon as possible without any preconditions." In "Armenian Reflections on Erdogan's US Trip" CNNTurk Online notes Gordon's remarks and offers an Armenian perspective on the speech quoting Armenian FM Nalbandyan saying "we started the dialogue based on the mutual understanding that there were no preconditions."

19 Miners Killed in Explosion

All TV channels at this time are reporting in breaking news that 19 miners killed in the mine collapse in the northwest province of Bursa's Mustafa Kemal Pasa town. A methane gas explosion occurred in the local mine last night at 19.30 while 32 people were working

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in the coal mine. 13 of the 32 workers were immediately rescued but 19 others were trapped after the blast that caused a collapse in the mine, reports mainstream Milliyet.

TGS Warns Police on 'American Agents' (Aksam)
Mainstream Aksam and Gazeteport website report the Turkish General Staff (TGS) sent a 'top secret' note to the Turkish Interior Ministry to warn the police against American spies working in Turkey. According to Aksam, the TGS said that the US Air Force Office of Special Investigation (AFOSI) members were exceeding their normal duties, and asked the police to not meet with AFOSI personnel without first obtaining permission. According to Aksam, the TGS made the same warning before President Obama visited Turkey in April, pointing out that Americans were meeting with local municipality people. Gazeteport adds that an AFOSI officer at the Incirlik Airbase met with some people in Giresun and Trabzon, inquiring about the fate of weapons that disappeared in Iraq, some of which were used in mystery killings in Turkey.

Reform Opponents Aligned Against Opening: Islamist-oriented Zaman OnLine reports that "Turkey's three main opposition parties, the Republican People's Party (CHP), Nationalist Movement Party (MHP) and the Democratic Society Party (DTP) hold the same position as the outlawed Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK) on the government's efforts for a reform package that could settle the country's decades-old Kurdish question, though they differ drastically on many other national issues." Zaman OnLine cites Deputy Prime Minister B|lent Aring's statement that "the opposition of the CHP and the MHP to the reform package is the same as that of the pro-Kurdish DTP" and they are all "seeking ways to make ... gains" following the Tokat terrorist attack. He accused the MHP and CHP in particular of making the funerals for the slain soldiers occasions for "psychological abuse."

TV News (CNN Turk)

Domestic

- Education Minister Nimet Cubukcu warned that children throwing stones to the security forces during protests might be taken from their parents and send to orphanages
- Supporters of various sports clubs attack DTP branch in Izmir. Seven assailants were taken into custody
- Council of State rejects the objections of the Higher Education Board (YOK) regarding a decision suspending adjustments in

university entrance exam regulations.

- The Chief Prosecutor makes preparations for filing a new suit for closing of AKP

World

- A Kuwaiti detainee held in prison in Guantanamo for almost eight years was sent home after a federal judge order of freedom

- Russia claimed that Azerbaijan and Armenia are close to a deal to end the conflict in Nagorno-Karabakh

- US Defense Secretary Robert Gates was in Iraq Thursday to meet with Iraqi officials amid a wave of bombings

SILLIMAN